

01 Loose

I remember one splendid morning, *all blue and silver, in the summer holidays when I reluctantly tore myself away from the task of doing nothing in particular, and put on a hat of some sort and picked up a walking-stick, and put six very brightly colored chalks in my pocket.*

1. Momma picked up the phone, black and imposing, after she had finished talking since there was clearly nothing more to say, and her lips tightened and her gnarled finger cycled each number around the dial and soon the phone was ringing in the front office at the steel mill.
2. I remember a dinner, so warm and filling, in the humid evening when I set down my fork after cleaning my plate, and pushed my chair back and wiped my lips on my shirtsleeve, and let out a low rumbling and cathartic belch.
3. I saw the dawn in the distance, all misty and indistinct, in springtime colors when I finally stood up from the front stoop where I had lazily lingered, and brushing the leaves off my pants and pulling my sweater sleeves down, I fingered the change in my pocket to make sure there was enough for the subway.
4. I can't remember the day, another frigid one of many, near Christmas when I nervously took the tin of cookies from the table, opening it once again to make sure it was well filled, and wondered if that quiet old man even liked cookies or would accept my present.
5. There was the boxcar, bruised and battered, the paint mostly peeled away, as if it were soundly sleeping after working a hard double-shift, and wanted only to be left alone at the siding and to never see the countryside of Topeka or Santa Fe in this or any other life.
6. I thought it must be very late at night, thick with quiet, long before dawn when I first became aware that I had been awake for some time, and there was someone by the window standing very still and waiting for me to roll over or resume my steady breathing.

7. She laughed at the fried catfish, all whittled into pieces, on that very first date when she realized they were finally alone together, and picked up her glass and held it aloft and cleared her voice and tried to knit her feelings into a single toast.

02 Periodic

Crossing a bare common, in snow puddles, at twilight, under a clouded sky, without having in my thoughts any occurrence of special good fortune, I have enjoyed a perfect exhilaration.

action, description, timing, location, description, verb.

1. Wondering where she was, in the garden, across the street, sniffing her way down the alley, reminded anew how truly deaf she had become in recent years, I bundled up to hunt my dog down again.
2. Even without any money, on a warm night, the folks inside watching TV, just enough petrol to get from nowhere in particular to nowhere specific, we felt our tiny town beckoned with opportunity.
3. Thinking of it now, without the guilt of abandonment, without the stench of boiling cabbage, without the memory of yapping dogs and parents arguing, it almost feels Norman Rockwellian.
4. There at the end of the hall, one shoe tied the other undone, the light of dusk highlighting his torn jeans , his arms a grayish white, his body slowly turned at the end of the rope.
5. Though I had sold every thing I owned, borrowed money I could never return, and had no more than a storybook idea about what I wanted to do, shuffling off the bus with the others I knew I was finally arriving where I belonged.
6. If ever you meet someone like this, willing to share a little or a lot, amused with the ups and downs of every day, generally dismissive of

any impediment to a goal, and always sliding her warm hand into yours, send her home--that's my wife!

03 Inverted

Immoral Ovid was, but he had high standards in art.

1. Easy was the stabbing, but cleaning it up was a trial.
2. Money I had earned, but friends did not come easily.
3. Quickly grew the asparagus, but corn takes much longer to mature.
4. Dangerous she was, but no one could avoid watching the way she moved.
5. Talk he did, so much over the hours I felt I had lost weight listening.
6. Delighted were they all, except for the pouting brat with his silly cap.
7. Slowly came sleep, after so many hours on the ship I had almost forgotten how.

04 Elliptic

Six o'clock. A summer's evening.

1. A tranquil morning. The smell of bacon.
2. Endless sneezing. Over and over.
3. A hole in my shoe. One wet sock.

4. The window wide open. Curtains thrashing.
5. The last peach. In the dirt.
6. The smell of cigarettes. Spilled bourbon.
7. A pile of brown leaves. An itchy sweater.

05 Simple

Centuries passed.

1. Life sucked.
2. The train left.
3. She winked.
4. I vomited.
5. Friedrich refused.
6. The building swayed.
7. Everything stopped.
8. I smelled smoke.

06 Simple, Anticipation

After skirting the river for three or four miles, I found a rickety footbridge.

Even after dark the touch of the wind has the warmth of human flesh.

Compared with that of the Taoists and the far eastern Buddhists, the Christian attitude towards nature has been curiously insensitive and often downright domineering and violent.

[Look out for a dependent clause--it will no longer be a "simple sentence".]

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1. *After a long swim and a longer walk home we collapsed on the couch.*
2. *Throughout the night his fever continued to rise.*
3. *Unlike all these cowboys with their steady cussing and spitting, the Indians projected calm and awareness.*
4. *Over the objections of everyone, she passed out the cheesecake like it was a novel idea.*
5. *Past the afternoon and through dusk we continued to play simple card games.*
6. *Wearied by the ceaseless arguing, I no longer blocked his entry into the conference room.*
7. *After reading the endless list of options, a turkey sandwich was all I could imagine eating.*
8. *Near the top of the hill we stopped to rest and survey the valley.*
9. *With my hat in my hands and the tears in my eyes, I asked if there was anything to eat.*
10. *Across the crowded dance floor our eyes met.*
11. *Without knowing exactly why, she sensed that there was a something between those two kids.*
12. *Before eating the freshly caught fish, he asked if we could offer a prayer to the god of fishing poles.*

13. *In the puddle* our newspaper sat soaking.

14. Despite the chill, I felt comfortable working for another hour without jacket, gloves, or pants.

07 Simple, Interruption

A barn, in day, is a small night.

The thought of her was like champagne itself.

You, the listener, sit opposite me.

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1. The wheel, ever in motion, cycled through the night.
2. The potatoes, again undercooked, were added to the picnic basket.
3. The thought of it happening was frightening to us all.
4. The smell of paint, when wet, gives me a day's headache.
5. She worried, fidgeting with her necklace, if she would look too young.
6. The car's upholstery, once the *mêlée* was over, was in tatters.
7. We traveled every year, no matter the weather, work schedule or family obstacles, to the old beach house in Portugal.
8. Only this good-natured novice, despite his facial ticks and garish clothing, could win the mayoral race.
9. The sandwich, dripping oil and shedding chunks of filling, would be his last meal.
10. The wind, first sighing and now wheezing, became a real impediment.

11. Women, when left to their own instincts, prefer to be left to their own instincts.

08 Simple, Afterthought

How beautiful to die of a broken heart, on paper.

These are our young barbarians at play.

The steadiest winds are the trades blowing diagonally toward the equator from the northeast to the southwest.

How strange to realize I had kissed her, years before.

How could they walk the whole way without shoes?

The silliest plot was by Jeffrey which featured penguins on an ice floe drifting from one adventure to another.

I finally understood what the old florist wanted from me when I received his letter.

The game ended quietly with my last five dollars.

It no longer mattered if she arrived, whether in swirling ball gown or a bikini.

I opened the parcel in a panic, the paper rattling to the floor.

All that was left was the waiting, while smoking cigarettes and pacing the floor and wishing all those greedy bastards a long hot summer in hell.

09 Simple Elaborated

The gulls went in slanting flight up the wind toward the grey desolate coast.

The girls ran in high excitement across the lawn towards the tennis court.

The menacing black birds flew in sweeping motions up to the treetops and their hidden nests.

Before they were noticed James and his mother slowly worked their way up the aisle to an alter scattere with odd rubbish.

As the rain subsided she nervously picked up her bags from behind the counter.

Arriving early, he only had an idle intent to buy a silly greeting card or some stationary.

It appeared that these beans, they alone, would be offered as a token of dinner.

His cart now fully loaded, he pushed it jerking and clattering down the rutted street.

Under the bridge where it was quiet, she fumbled, her hands still stiff and cold, with the tarnished spoon and the can of soup, or what was left of it.

Amazed to find the banjo still in the old house, he slowly began to play the one song Euly had taught him as a boy, halting at first but soon building up to an steady tempo.

10 Compound

The great tragic artists of the world are four, and three of them are Greek.

And, or, nor, for, so,
however, therefore, consequently, otherwise.
but, then, still, yet,

Semicolon before, comma after: Also, additionally, however, nevertheless,
therefore, consequently, hence, furthermore, indeed, still, then.

The smallest predators of the world are fleas, and they alone rule all.

Dave was the the worst pianist in town, or perhaps he was the hardest to understand.

Her hair was a shimmering blond, and the texture was very fine.

He thought about stealing the shirt, but it had an obvious monogram.

I wanted to get there on time, but I would need to find a place to sleep first.

Again all the seats were filled, however one of the people had changed.

The party roared for hours, so the band played louder and sloppier.

She spoke to me like I was a friend, yet I stood there like a waiter.

I feigned a great interest in some papers; still, I was hoping they'd invite me along.

My manner was casual, almost uninterested; nevertheless, I felt out of place and oafish.

I was an unsophisticated bumpkin; however they were too self-absorbed to consider anything else.

My shoes had holes and my gloves had holes; indeed, my holes had holes of their own.

11 Compound, Coordinator Only

We would walk out with a bottle of pop apiece and sometimes the pop would backfire up your nose and hurt.

I couldn't respond well to her strange attitude and she didn't seem to have any interest in me.

That first night in the city is one I won't forget because it came to shape how I thought of the place for many years.

I checked into my room without signing anything but I had to pay for the first week in full.

The room smelled like cigarettes and sweat so I opened the window and it smelled car exhaust and burned meat.

She smiled at me with a curious look and I immediately felt a tingling in my crotch.

You could see the woman was made out of money because her gloves probably cost more than my guitar.

Did she want me because I was smart and fast or did she want me because she thought I was some kind of exciting lower form of mammal?

I walked into the place and checked my hat and coat and they gave me a ticket to pick them up later.

I looked at the ticket to see if it meant anything but it only had a number on it.

My hat-check number was 222 so I couldn't help wondering if there were 221 people already in the club.

Me and Bill were excited about doing the job but couldn't help wondering where the hell we were going to get tuxedos.

12 Compound, Punctuation

It the morning it was sunny, the lake was blue.

[Jesus, this one is hard and would indeed be used rarely.]

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She was now very late; I began to feel sick.

The check was over a hundred dollars; I had less than forty.

He was eager to go; I couldn't imagine leaving.

We tried again at the front door: The doorman stared us down.

I had never seen such a panel: It had row upon row of little buttons.

The sun was already down; I was in big trouble.

She asked again; again I refused.

The warm breeze blew through the cab, her perfume filled it with summer.

I had the audience in the palm of my hand, they watched every move I made.

I swung to the left; their eyes and heads followed.

I pointed to the wings where Dad stood watching--he seemed to be floating on his smile.

The audience erupted in cries and applause; he waved wildly to them all like flagging down a car.

I pushed her too hard, she lost interest. I disregarded her, she clung to me.

13 Compound Elaborated

We were somewhere near Sorrento; behind us lay the curve of faint glimmering lights on the Napes shore; ahead was Capri.

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I was far up the face of the cliff; above me seemed nothing but sheer rock; looking below I saw no possible retreat.

Della wasn't interested in talking; she couldn't eat; it was clear she was falling apart.

So here were we two; she was brimming with life and spirit; I was entranced with ambition and adventure.

The performance was a great success; the audience was completely energized despite the late hour; the till was full to bursting.

What if we do get caught--he won't shoot us--they can't arrest us!

We had no car and so were adrift, the hour was very late, we were exhausted.

Quiet now enveloped the apartment; it was clearly empty--our friends were at home snoring.

Are you hungry; there's lots to eat--perhaps you'd like a drink?

She was hopelessly sweet, there wasn't a trace of guile; I guessed there was a bible in her bag somewhere.

The shopping list included nonsensical items, no one needed glue; could this be a code of some kind?

14 Complex, Anticipation, Subordinate and Punctuation

If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in water.

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If that's a man in a gorilla suit, he's at the wrong party.

Where they decided to hide the money, we couldn't guess.

That but a single conclusion would be possible; this was my only intent.

Although she acted giddy and gay, no one was convinced of her performance.

So that everyone could find some measure of satisfaction, she had bought three kinds of pastry.

Before the first sounds of morning were heard, he had slipped in and was feigning sleep.

Suddenly realizing his acidic opinions might be seen as a challenge, he began playing dumb about everything.

While asking questions or making making his own points, he measured only his deference.

Though unsure if my ploy was working, they began vying for a post as my mentor.

While he gestured at the painting, pointing out the details of the brush technique, I easily slipped the wallet out of his pocket, removed the bills and returned it.

15 Complex, Subordinates only

Whenever people are short on ideas they tend to use long words.

If thugs are left to rules the streets community standards will suffer.

When she stood to go I thought it likely for the best.

With the raccoon stuck in the air duct we were all crazy with fright.

She showed off her new outfit as if she were a model.

I couldn't eat anything because I was too anxious about the job.

He rolled up his sleeves before he began preparing the meal.

Everyone knew there would be a fight if Doug opened his mouth one more time.

I found a small box there where the old man had been standing.

While the pot roast smelled fantastic I knew I wasn't getting any.

When they were sitting down you couldn't see which girl was the shorter one.

Where I was standing in the wings I could hardly see anything at all.

? I knew that I was the guy who the fat man was looking for.

16 Complex - Interruption, Subordinates and Punctuation

Richard's crown, which he wore to the last, was picked out of a bush and placed upon the victor's head.

David's shoes, which he had bought that morning, squeaked with every footfall.

Mom's apple pie, which once was her crowning glory, tasted like mush with no taste at all.

A few misguided arrows, Over the heads of the farmers, as they *whizzing through the night sky*, came.

Her neck, because it was thoroughly powdered, made a mess of her kimono.

A roast beef sandwich, after I assembled it carefully, became the centerpiece of the table.

❑ Her watch and the Chinese vase, since these were items of value both emotional and monetary, were pawned last.

This uncle, though he wasn't really a relative, was invited to the wedding reception.

Most of our local shops, which we passed nearly every day, lined the other side of the street.

❑ She stood, while he took ever more time preparing, by the door with the keys in her hand.

17 Complex, Interruption, Punctuation Only

This tree, I learned quite early, was exactly my age, was, in a sense, me.

Their cat, I understood soon after arriving, spent the entire day sleeping.

These pancakes, I had eaten nothing similar, were leaden and doughy.

I asked, my voice was now sounding strained, for more information.

She knew, I could see it in her eyes, what the result would be.

Trout, there must have been hundreds, were rushing to us, waiting patiently to be caught.

I wanted--I expected to get--whichever cheap booze they were selling.

In the hatch she found, in the last place she looked, the boy hiding, cold and shivering.

Through the overgrown field she strolled, she never considered the road, to the old farmhouse.

Up in the tree, it was farther than I could climb, was yet another quietly chirping nest.

18 Complex - Restrictive Interruption, Subordinate only

All works of art which deserve their names have a happy end.

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All the tomatoes which are worth eating are grown in my wife's garden.

A box of doubloons which were worth a fortune lay open before us.

Many nights that weren't too cold we slept on the balcony.

The house which always looked gloomy had been spruced up by someone.

His paws which looked almost like human hands dug the hole deeper still.

The gloves that he like best had lost one another in the closet.

The ornaments that we loved best were still in a packing box somewhere.

The mountain range which loomed in the distance seemed too distant to reach by foot.

Everyone that had an interest in coffee service had been gone for hours.

Playing the cards which she held in her hand would have to wait.

19 Complex - Afterthought, Subordinator and Punctuation

Charles had decided definitely on Princeton, even though he would be the only boy entering that year from St. Regis.

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Otis had selected the smaller pistol, as if it would be the least deadly should anything actually be struck.

The truck remained locked up by the loading dock, until someone could be found to unload it.

She wondered if he had any real interest in her, after she saw his enthusiasm for Blanche.

Robert pushed the plate away, before ordering another round for the table.

The table was also made from rosewood, because his father had imported the wood from Brazil.

She carefully laid out all the silverware and name tags, since dinner guests would soon be arriving.

Something about the flower arrangement was very wrong, although she couldn't figure out exactly what.

There was now the one last box of books, which were the only ones he cared anything about.

Again he had waited until midnight, though she never planned to meet him there.

The pair must have come in the back door, unless the windows had been left unlocked.

20 Complex - Afterthought, Subordinator Only

The trees stood massively in all their summer foliage spotted and grouped upon a meadow which sloped gently down from the big white house.

The three mobsters stood idle at the corner in expensive but well-wrinkled suits in front of a building which showed all the signs of a generation of decay and neglect.

The hopeful actor saw his opportunity there in the script he held tightly with the fear that it might fly away and evaporate like a dream.

He submitted to laying back in the dental chair which was adjusted so he could stare directly into the lamp above.

The old house certainly looked quaint with its old world shutters and the smoke that curled ever so easily above the chimney and drifted away.

Here was the old man's beloved fountain pen which a lifetime of scribbling had produced not a single line of any real interest.

She jumped into her little bed clothed with kitty-cat patterned sheets and pillows which were all plumped up or smoothed down for a princess's dreams.

He again found himself on the bus to the seedier part of town that was across the bridge to the other side of the river.

He was now quite hungry for something substantial and filling that could be remembered and called by name three hours later without straining his memory.

21 Elaborated Complex

Early in May, the oaks, hickories, maples and other trees, just putting out amidst the pinewoods around the pond, imparted a brightness like sunshine to the landscape especially in cloudy days, as if the sun were breaking through mists and shining faintly on the hillsides here and there.

Late last summer, Tony, Doug and some guys on my softball team, tired from a long hard-fought season now concluded and with our injuries healed, took a vote and decided to get drunk as if we were high school know-nothings who had no obligations whatsoever.

Before signing the papers, Mom and I, excited from all the deliberation, exchanged a glance that spoke of relief which said a lot more than any words.

Under the shade of the tree we sat while I re-assembled my bike, and reuminated over the day's events begun so early and now ending so very late in the afternoon.